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A Journey through Yemen. By Major-General F. T. HAIG.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, June 27th, 1887.)

THE following paper has been compiled from rough notes of a tour through Yemen made in the month of January last. It may be useful to future travellers, and also as furnishing some information respecting a country in which we have certainly a deeper interest than any other nation, but about which we have hitherto been content to know very little. It is forty-seven years since we took possession of Aden, and established a protectorate over some of the Arab tribes around it, tribes numbering 130,000 souls, and occupying a tract of country 200 miles in length by 40 in breadth. With these tribes we have distinct treaty engagements; we subsidise them so long as they are of good behaviour, that is to say, pay them blackmail to the extent of 12,000 dollars a year, and trouble ourselves no further about them than occasionally to interfere to put down a disturbance, or to decide some disputed question of succession.

Their territory not being divided from that to the north of it by any mountain range or physical barrier of any kind, one would have thought that some explorations of Turkish Yemen would have been made, and some interest in its condition displayed by us. On the contrary, we are mainly indebted to an enterprising Italian, Renzo Manzoni, for what information we possess respecting it, and the map made by that officer is the only one of any value that we have. This map, which is published by Stanford, was my sole guide during my own tour, and I found it to be exceedingly accurate along the route which I took until, on my way southward from Sanaa, I entered British territory. There it is full of mistakes; Manzoni probably filled it in from information obtained in Aden.

My own object in visiting Yemen (the ancient Arabia Felix) was to see what the country was like, and to learn something of the condition of its inhabitants, with a view to ascertaining whether it might be possible to do anything for their Christianisation. The route I marked out for myself, and which I was enabled to follow, was from Hodeida on the western coast to Sanaa, the capital, a distance of 140 miles, and from Sanaa due south to Aden, 260 miles. Including a week spent in Sanaa, the journey occupied in all thirty-one days. I was accompanied by Ibrahim, the Bible Society's agent at Aden, a very worthy man, who, though he knows no English, understood my bad Arabic sufficiently to put it into good and intelligent Arabic for me, and so acted as interpreter. I had a Somali servant, an exceedingly active, intelligent, energetic fellow, who proved himself quite equal to any travelling servant I ever had in India. Mules were the animals selected to carry us, as being on the whole more comfortable to ride

than either camels or donkeys, though a little dearer. The Yemen mules are small, sturdy, compact animals, capable of any amount of fatigue, and seemingly of climbing wherever a goat can climb, while to my astonishment I found that the camels would go wherever a mule will. Including the two muleteers we were a party of five. The charge per mule was 4 dollars, which, according to Arab custom, I had to pay down in full before starting. Before describing our journey I may here give a few particulars about Hodeida, our starting-point.

I had previously visited Jeddah, Suakin, and Massowah, and was surprised to find Hodeida the busiest place of the four. There was more life and movement in the streets and crowded bazaars than I had seen elsewhere, more signs of trade and business generally. Being the principal port of Yemen, most of the coffee and hides which are the staple exports of the country are shipped from here. The population may be from 25,000 to 30,000, including that in the suburbs outside the walls. Within the walls the houses, which are mostly from three to four stories in height, are crowded together, the streets being mere narrow lanes six to nine feet in width. The bazaars are extensive, and roofed over with poles and mats laid across to keep out the sun. The town is no cleaner than most Arab towns, but superior in this respect to Jeddah. The water supply is poor, derived from wells at some distance from the town. The market is fairly supplied with fruit and vegetables. There are about half-a-dozen English and Americans resident, and a good many Greeks and other Levantines. There is no harbour, but simply an open roadstead, the steamers lying a mile and a half off the shore, but there is a pier, in somewhat rickety condition, at which goods are shipped and landed. There is a vice-consul, a Mahomedan gentleman on the Bombay Medical Establishment, from whom I received much kindness, and who is also inspector of the quarantine arrangements at the island of Camaran, to the north, during the season of the Haj.

We started for Sanaa, a party of five, on the evening of the 29th January. We had no guard of any kind, all the information I received at Hodeida tending to show there was no necessity for such a precaution. There may, no doubt, have been so in former times, but the iron rule of the Turks has at least rendered this, the most frequented and important line of communication in the country, comparatively safe for travellers. For the first twenty-five miles the road lies across a gently undulating plain, covered with low thorny bushes and tufts of coarse grass. This is the Tehama, and no doubt intensely hot in summer. Then, as a low line of hills is approached, signs of cultivation begin to appear, fields of *dharra* and *dokhu* (kinds of millet), and three or four small villages are passed, the name of one of these, "Deir el Hoonood," the monastery of the Hindus, suggesting the idea that there may be truth in the tradition that there was formerly a considerable body of Indians in this part of

Yemen. The plain, though somewhat narrowed by the approach of the hills on both sides, continues on to Bajol, a place of some importance, about a fourth the size of Hodeida, with a somewhat dilapidated fort, very solidly built with cut stone, and a large population of weavers and dyers.

At this point the hills rise to the proportions of mountains, the valley between, up which the road runs, turning to the south-east, its surface gravelly in most parts, but having a good deal of cultivation, and trees such as acacias, dotted here and there over it. This is its character for the next ten miles, after which the road enters and winds among low spurs, but passing frequently through cultivated lands and patches of forest of considerable height, and gradually becoming rougher and more hilly until finally El Hujjela is reached, at a distance of about seventy-five miles from Hodeida.

We reached this place long after dark, and put up at the Kahwa (coffee-house) or travellers' rest-house, a large open thatched shed, which was brilliantly lighted up by a good kerosine lamp, which seemed strangely out of place in such a situation. Large quantities of kerosine are, however, imported into Yemen. Much of it is sent to Sanaa, and the kerosine cans are commonly used for carrying water at Hodeida and elsewhere, as the taste of the water sometimes makes very plain. Hujjela I found by aneroid to be 1780 feet above sea.

At this point the road enters the mountains, which towered grandly above the little town situated near their foot. And here not only the character of the scenery changed, but also that of the towns and villages. In the plains they are built of mud, with thatched roofs. Throughout the mountainous country they are all built of solid stone, the houses being often of two to three stories in height, clustered closely around the *burj*, or tower, which rises in the centre to a considerable height above its surroundings. The *burj* has usually been the residence of the Sheikh, and would serve the purpose also of a watch-tower. Hujjela was the first of this kind of villages that we came to, and I found, on rising in the morning and taking a survey of the place and the surrounding country, that we had now indeed entered Yemen proper.

A mile or two outside of the town the road enters the mountains, following the bed of a torrent strewn with enormous boulders, having many fine trees along its banks, but dry at the time of our visit. The mountains rose steeply on both sides several thousand feet in height, but with little vegetation on their lower slopes. Higher up we saw terraces, and higher still large patches of coffee clustering in the ravines. As we advanced the torrent bed became steeper and more difficult. The toilsome ascent was, however, relieved by the magnificence of the scenery. Openings in the mountains on both sides revealed other ranges rising up to 6000 and 7000 feet, their rugged tops crowned at many points by villages, while other villages, surrounded by coffee plantations, nestled

on their slopes. One of these views I shall never forget, where a pile of mountains rose steeply up, one above the other, like a huge pyramid, on the top of which, through the clear air, we could distinctly see, at a height of 8000 feet, the invariable village, its burj standing clearly out against the sky, the exquisitely soft and rich colouring of the whole being beyond description.

After following the torrent bed some miles further, the road, or rather pathway (for it must be understood that there is no such thing as a made road in the country) turned suddenly out of it and followed a zigzag up the steep mountain side, every bit of which was terraced and cultivated. Far above us, at a height which I afterwards found to be 4660 feet, we could see the village, burj, and kahwa (coffee-house), where we were to rest a while. We reached this about noon, and after a cup of coffee, commenced the ascent once more. Here I began for the first time to form some conception of the meaning of the magnificent scene around me. The village was perched, as the villages always are, on top of a precipitous mass of rock at the end of a spur, and from it I looked down 2000 feet into the torrent bed below, and 4000 feet up to the top of the mountain, and everywhere, both above and below, to the right and to the left, I saw nothing but terraces. The whole mountain side, for a height of 6000 feet, was terraced from top to bottom. The crops had all been removed; only some lines of coffee trees here and there were to be seen, but everywhere, above, below, and all around, these endless flights of terrace walls met the eye. One can hardly conceive the enormous amount of labour, toil, and perseverance which these represent. The terrace walls are usually from five to eight feet in height, but towards the top of the mountain they are much higher, being sometimes as much as 15 and 18 feet. They are built entirely of rough stone, laid without mortar. I reckoned on an average that each wall retains a terrace not more than twice its own height in width. So steep, in fact, is the mountain, that the zigzag continues almost the whole way to the top. It has been made with considerable care, and though its surface is often rough and broken, the wall which retains it is generally in good repair. This was indeed the most striking characteristic of the whole mass of terrace walls, the excellent condition in which they are maintained. I do not think I saw a single breach in one of them unrepaired. It is impossible not to feel that a race which has erected such a marvellous monument of human industry as this one mountain side displays, possesses capacities fitting it not only for a far higher civilisation, but for no mean place in the scale of nationalities. The whole of the crops are grown on these terraces, wheat and barley, coffee and indigo, fruits and vegetables. We reached the top of the mountain, which we crossed at its lowest point, about sunset, when it was wrapped in clouds and mist. Its height by aneroid was 8000 feet. We then descended the other side to Menakha, which is situated at a height of 7610 feet, and

36 miles distant from Hodeida. Here we found ourselves in quite a pleasant climate, the temperature about 65°.

Menakha may have a population of 4000. It has a Turkish garrison, and is an important strategical position. It is commanded from more than one point on the mountain, and there forts have been erected. I was imprudent enough to make a sketch of it from a neighbouring hill, which led to some polite inquiries by the Commandant, and a telegraphic message to the Governor-General at Sanaa, but not to any very serious difficulty. It may be mentioned here that there is a telegraph line from Hodeida, via Menakha, to Sanaa, which appears to be kept in pretty good order, though merchants at Hodeida say it is sometimes quicker to send by post, though that is only once a week.

Leaving Menakha the road descends the eastern face of the mountain for 2700 feet by a far steeper and rougher path than that on the opposite face. It is in fact for much of the way simply a steep pile of boulders, down which one wonders how the little mules contrive to keep their feet. Here, however, and in worse places further on, it is still more surprising to meet or overtake strings of loaded camels pursuing their way with as much composure as if they were simply crossing a plain. The descent is down the end of a ravine, into a torrent leading out into broken hilly country at a general level of 5000 to 5500 feet, with but little cultivation. The trees and shrubs were here, as indeed almost everywhere else, scanty, and at that season for the most part leafless. Mefaq was the halting-place for the night, the khan where we stopped being 5860 feet above sea, and the town and fort some 500 feet higher.

We were late in starting next morning, and halted for an hour at noon at Suk el Khamis, 7740 feet above sea. We were now steadily rising as we proceeded. It was very cold, and though wrapped in my warmest clothes, I could hardly keep myself warm. After leaving Suk el Khamis, the path rises by exceedingly steep inclines up the almost precipitous side of a mountain, growing worse and worse as we proceeded, the mules climbing over great boulders and trotting over smooth rocks on the edge of terrific precipices. At last we reached the highest point of the pass, 10,010 feet, the hills on each side of the path being about 400 feet higher. Here a great extent of terracing was in sight. Then there was a rapid descent to a stream, the bed of which was 9600, and this continued to be about the average level of the country for several miles on to Selim Basha, a small village where we passed the night, sixteen miles distant from Sanaa. The views this day were indescribably magnificent, especially from the highest part of the pass. Far away on the horizon westward were ranges which seemed quite as high, while all between was an endless succession of mountains, ravines, valleys, precipices, and rocky heights crowned by villages, the whole lit up by a brilliant sunshine, the rich and varied tints of the nearer hills gradually passing into the soft misty purples of the more distant ranges.

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After crossing the stream above-mentioned, a few hundred feet below the highest point of the pass, the road lay through a country of quite a new character; a succession of steppes, gently sloping valleys, generally terraced and cultivated, from half a mile to a mile in width, between low hills of trap, each steppe separated from the next by a short sharp descent. This is the character of the whole highlands of Yemen, as far as I was able to judge. It continued up to a point a few miles from Sanaa, where a sudden turn brought us within sight of the town lying 2000 feet below in a broad flat valley some miles in width, and extending in a north-east and south direction as far as the eye could reach. The descent into the plain is rapid, and in another hour or two I was resting beneath the hospitable roof of the Messrs. Caprotti, two Italian gentlemen, who received me with the utmost kindness and made me their guest during the six days I spent in Sanaa.

It will thus be seen that to reach Sanaa I had to surmount an elevation of 10,000 feet. The map seems to show that by a more southerly route this may be avoided, and that a practicable road might be made with far less serious obstacles. My aneroid made the height of Sanaa above the sea 7700 feet. Mr. Glaser, an Austrian savant who has recently been exploring the antiquities of the country, I was told, makes it 7281 feet, a difference of about 6 per cent.

The town of Sanaa is entirely surrounded by a wall, partly earthen, partly brick, of some miles in circuit, and enclosing a space which evidently once contained a population very much larger than the present, which is roughly calculated at 30,000 to 35,000 souls. The large Jewish quarter, with a population of 5000, is separated from the Mahommedan parts of the town by a broad space of 150 yards in width. The houses are from three to four stories in height, built of stone in most cases, quite destitute of any architectural beauty, but with a good deal of ornamentation of a peculiar kind on the walls and around the windows. An objection was made by the Wali, or Governor-General, to my sketching, and I could obtain no photographs. I was therefore obliged to leave without bringing away with me any illustrations of a style of architecture differing much from anything I had seen elsewhere. The bazaars are poor, and the whole aspect of the town corresponded to the social condition of its inhabitants as described to me, an Arab population intensely hating the few thousand Turks by whom it is held down, heavily taxed, and generally obliged to furnish gratis the supplies required for the large garrison of Turkish soldiers. The latter are not allowed to go into the narrow streets for fear of assassination. They seemed to be well fed, but often badly clothed. There is a citadel at one part of the walls, with its guns turned significantly not to the outside, but upon the town. Large barracks are being constructed, and there is a large military hospital, which I gathered from an application I made, it was not wished that I should see. The water supply is good,

being derived from wells sunk to great depths in the rock. Vast heaps of rubbish here and there show where extensive buildings must once have stood, and I was shown the few and scarcely distinguishable ruins of a Christian church of pre-Islamic times. I called upon the Governor-General, and must do him the justice to say that, in spite of the suspicious circumstances in which I was first brought to his notice, and of my having neither letter of introduction, passport, nor even a printed visiting card, he received me graciously, and granted me permission to proceed direct to Aden, instead of returning to Hodeida. He had much to ask about Egypt and the Soudan, and especially about India, wishing to know if any part of it corresponded in its physical characteristics to Yemen. I told him of the Himalayas and of Darjiling, which, though situated at a similar height, 7000 feet, to Sanaa, is connected with the plains and Calcutta by rail. There appears to be no reason why Sanaa should not be similarly connected with the port. Probably, it would not be necessary to surmount any greater height than 8000 feet, and the peculiar steppe formation of the highlands would greatly facilitate the extension of the line in two or three directions.

The Jewish population of Sanaa appeared to be generally well-to-do. Their quarter was clean, their houses models of neatness and cleanliness. They have twenty-three synagogues, and twenty schools with 700 boys in them. The whole male population can read, few of the females. They are the masons and artificers, and are preferred to the Mahomedans as servants by the few Europeans, as being both cleaner, more intelligent, and more trustworthy. They reckon their total numbers in Yemen at 60,000. We found them in almost every town and village that we stopped at.

Before describing the road southwards to Aden I may here give some information as to the climate and productions of high Yemen.

There are two rainy seasons, in spring and autumn. No measure of the rainfall has ever been taken, but the rain is said to come down in torrents, generally falling every day, but only for a few hours. I was shown one part of Sanaa where the drainage flows in a perfect river at such times. The temperature in winter often falls below freezing-point during the night, and in the hottest season the thermometer does not rise above 80° in the open air in the shade. The temperature in the houses, which have thick walls, remains at about 62° all the year round. Last year was one of almost total failure of rain. The country consequently, when I passed through it, had an exceedingly parched, dried-up appearance, and the temperature was higher than usual at that season. The thermometer was about 45° in the open air in the early morning, but never rose above 62° in the house in Sanaa. This failure of the rainfall leads me to remark upon what is probably the chief cause of it, viz. the almost total deforesting of the mountains above the 6000 feet level. The utter bareness of the soil,

the almost total absence of either trees or bushes, was a marked and painful feature of the greater part of the highland plateaux which I traversed. The people themselves seemed to have no traditions of there ever having been more vegetation on the surface, but looking at the fact that below the level I have mentioned both trees and shrubs were certainly much more numerous, though the soil was inferior and the rainfall must be less, while the population is less numerous, I think there can be little doubt that the denudation of the mountains is simply due to the reckless destruction of the forests by an ignorant and yet numerous population, and the neglect of any efforts to replace them by fresh planting. If so, the seasons have no doubt deteriorated, and the rainfall is scantier and more precarious than formerly. Still there are evidently springs in all directions all over the mountains; it is impossible that under any other conditions could the villages be perched, as they always are, upon the highest and most inaccessible points.

All the streams we passed had fish in them. In the large Wady Bauna there were shoals of fish as much as six inches in length, and I was told that in Sanaa fish can sometimes be bought up to 12 lbs. in weight.

Irrigation is universally practised, the available water supply being distributed by the hour to the lands entitled to it, the Arabs being very clever at judging the time by measuring, foot by foot, the length of the shadow. The task of distribution does not always fall upon the sheikh of the village, but more commonly upon some one of the elders having a reputation for honesty and fairness. The soil is rich; two crops a year appears to be the rule everywhere, and with irrigation three and four. The tillage is excellent. The plough, though it only turns up the soil to the depth of a few inches, is often followed by a large sort of hoe, something like a street-scraper, by means of which the loosened soil is turned over transversely, one man holding the scraper and two others dragging it by a rope attached to it. Land is freely bought and sold within each tribe, and is inherited from the father in equal portions by the children, except that a daughter's share is only one-half the son's.

The Yemenis appear to be a prolific race. We saw everywhere great numbers of children. The woman in charge of the khan in one village that we passed through had ten children. On my expressing surprise I was assured that that number was not uncommon, and was told of another woman in the village who had had fifteen sons, every one of whom, it was added, died on the battle-field.

In spite of all their toil and labour, and the wonderful industry with which they terrace and cultivate the land, the people generally looked poor, often miserably so. Their clothing is of the meanest; a sheepskin coat, the wool turned inside, is the most important garment of the men. The taxation is, I fear, heavy and capricious. It is constantly collected only by military force. A Turkish official told me

that defaulters are sometimes tied to the muzzle of a loaded field-piece. If the threat never goes further than this, one can hardly suppose it likely to have any effect, while yet one shrinks from imputing even to the Turks, in the absence of positive evidence, such horrible barbarity as the consummation of the threat would imply. But passion and hate run high on both sides. Whole villages are sometimes razed, and the Turks have more than once marched back to Sanaa with the Arabs' heads on the points of their bayonets. It is needless to say that not one farthing of the taxes taken from the people is returned to them in any shape or form whatever.

The productions of Yemen are numerous. Coffee, indigo, and other dyes are the most important. Vegetables of all kinds are abundant; some, such as cabbages, cauliflowers, &c., growing to an enormous size and weight. There is a profusion of fruit—grapes, figs, walnuts, peaches, apricots, pears, &c. Grapes, I was told, are to be had during half the year, and of large size and excellent flavour.

The principal exports are coffee and hides. There is a nominal export duty of only 1 per cent., but actually the amount levied is nearer 20 or 25 per cent. The fiscal system of the Turks, if it were really carried into effect, would be by no means bad, but like every other department of the Government, it is ruined by the utter corruption that prevails in every branch of the administration from top to bottom. No more eloquent expounders of the evils and hopelessness of their whole system are to be found than the Turks themselves, as I found from conversations with two or three of their own officials.

The road from Sanaa to Aden runs at first for many miles in a nearly southerly direction, but a Greek having been murdered on it, one or two marches from Sanaa, a few days before I started, I was taken by a more circuitous route, viâ Walan and Ma'abar. For the first twenty-five miles the road runs through a broad valley, slowly rising until at length the hills enclosing it are crossed at a height of 9600 feet. There is then a steep descent by a broad zigzag path, which still has some remains of the massive paving which covered it in the times of the Arab dynasties. This leads to a great plain at least twenty miles in length, and from three to five miles in width, cultivated in parts, many wells being in use for this purpose, and having a few villages scattered over it. Ma'abar, which is one of these, where we stopped for the night, is 8080 feet above the sea. The plain extends some miles further, and the road then rises on to a vast flat plateau of trap, quite bare for a mile or two, then disintegrated into a soil which is extensively cultivated. The highest point in this plateau was at the village of Darrab, 8510 feet. Dhamar, an important town of some thousands of inhabitants, and having a Turkish garrison, is situated at the southern end of the plateau. It bears throughout the marks of Turkish rule—decay, poverty, and squalor. There are some mosques, and two or three minarets, all, like most of the

minarets in Sanaa and elsewhere, out of the perpendicular. One had been nearly brought down by a shot from a Turkish cannon during some *émeute*, when the Arabs took refuge in the mosque, and the Turks fired upon it.

Proceeding southwards from Dhamar, the road lies over great sheets of trap for some distance, and through a very broken mountainous country to Yerim, an important town about the size of Dhamar, 9260 feet above the sea. Yerim is 80 miles from Sanaa, and 170 miles from Aden. Here we met for the first time with quarter rupees and two-anna bits in the bazaar, marking the limits to which British coinage has penetrated. Elsewhere the Austrian dollar and some copper coins were the only coins to be seen, and these are in fact, as a rule, the only kind of money in which the Arabs believe. When I paid off my camel-men in Aden they refused to take rupees, and insisted on having dollars instead.

After leaving Yerim, the road ran for many miles through a series of broad valleys, well cultivated, with a good deal of irrigation. Then a sudden descent of several hundred feet took us into the bed of a torrent, which led out into a much larger valley between high mountains, scarped and precipitous at the top, but their lower slopes beautifully terraced and irrigated, and dotted over with numerous villages. We found we were in the valley of the Wady Bunna. The road, which was only a few feet in width, ran along the steep side of a mountain at a giddy height above the river at its foot, but about sunset we descended into the Wady and crossed the stream, which was flowing with a rapid current about thirty feet in width and eighteen inches deep. Its bed I found to be 7110 feet above the sea.

The whole road south of Yerim lay through a country much greener than any we had yet seen; there was much grass and turf, and small bushes covering the hill slopes gave them quite an appearance of verdure. All the way south of Sanaa we found bushes and trees along the margins of the streams, but south of Yerim the country looked as if there must be a more abundant rainfall. Certainly there was a marked change in the appearance of verdure everywhere.

The next day's journey was one of great fatigue. The road lay through a very wild country, and at length towards evening gradually ascended to the top of a mountain range which we crossed at its lowest point, 8610 feet. We then descended 1900 feet down the other side by the steepest and most difficult path we had yet traversed. It was wonderful how the mules kept their feet at all. The difficulty was increased by our meeting strings of loaded camels and donkeys carrying up tobacco, cloth, and other things from Aden to Sanaa.

A march of 30 miles next day through mountains more wooded than any we had seen before brought us to Qataba, the frontier customs town of Turkish Yemen. We crossed the frontier the following day at El Gelile and entered the territory of the protected tribes, which is here

at an elevation of 4000 feet above sea. In the first part of the 80 miles between this point and Aden the descent is rapid. The hotter plains are then reached, but these furnish no subjects of any interest for remark. I sent off my camels with my servant to Aden, but myself, with Ibrahim, struck off on foot in a south-east direction through the Abian country to Shugra on the coast, where we found a boat and by it made our way back to Aden, some 60 miles, by sea.

The country which I have described does not appear to be the finest part of Yemen. I was told that the finest country in point of population and productions lies to the north of Sanaa. The mountain region extends quite 300 miles north of that place into Assir. The watershed would appear to be some distance to the east of the meridian of Sanaa, but the country there has been very little explored. Enough has, however, perhaps been said to show that the whole of this part of Arabia is deserving of greater attention and more careful investigation than have yet been bestowed upon it. Much of it possesses a climate quite suitable for European colonisation. In addition to coffee, which is indigenous, and the cultivation of which is probably capable of considerable extension, Yemen is said to possess mineral riches. I was told by two Europeans that they had themselves seen coal, and that there is much sulphur as well as iron ore. The Turks of course do nothing for it; under their rule its capabilities are kept down to their lowest possible point. But they hold it with difficulty. They have already once been expelled from Sanaa, every man of them having been put to the sword. If the time should come that they would be obliged to evacuate Yemen, there can be no doubt that English rule would be welcomed. Aden is visited by Arabs from all parts of Yemen, and the spectacle of a wise, firm, and just rule there presented has made a deep impression upon the whole population. There can be little doubt they would gladly see it extended to their own country. Meantime the Turks are quietly endeavouring to push their frontier further east into Hadramaut, a country in its western part very similar apparently to Yemen, and so completely to hem in on all sides the little strip of British territory around Aden. The Kaimakam of Qataba, the frontier town, an old Turkish officer, was full of a project for annexing the Yafa country to the east, and spoke to me about it more than once. How far it is wise to allow Turkey thus to extend and surround our own territory on every side, this is not the place to discuss. Certain it is that such extension brings no good to races possessing very considerable natural capabilities, and quite capable of appreciating the benefits of a wise and enlightened government.

After General Haig's paper,

Sir F. GOLDSMID agreed with General Haig that it was most desirable to learn something more about Yemen. The neighbouring Hadramaut also was an exceedingly interesting region about which very little was known beyond the line of coast. It was not, perhaps, generally realised that Hadramaut was the mother country of

the Dutch Arab colonists in Java and the Eastern Archipelago. Recently the Government of the Netherlands had published a work on those colonists, and in that there was the usual lament that so little was known about the interior of Hadramaut. The thanks of the Society were due to General Haig for having brought forward this subject of the exploration of Yemen.*

The PRESIDENT said that General Haig had by this journey opened up a field for further investigation and inquiry, and it was to be hoped that some enterprising travellers would follow in his path, and obtain further details of the condition of the people and the natural productions of these regions. He agreed with General Haig that some discredit attached to the British Government for not having done a great deal more towards the exploration of mountain districts which were within easy reach of Aden and Muscat. Considering the beautiful climate that prevailed within a short distance of Aden in these mountains, he thought that something might be done towards forming a settlement in them which might be visited by the British occupants of Aden.

*Recent Changes in the Map of East Africa.**

Map, p. 530.

THE accompanying map shows the political boundaries in Eastern Equatorial Africa resulting from the agreement arrived at by the British and German Governments in October last. The movement which has led to the acquisition of territories in the Zanzibar region by Germany, originated with Dr. K. Peters, who founded in April 1884, a "Society for German Colonisation" at Berlin, similar in plan to an older "Kolonialverein," but bent upon the realisation of more ambitious schemes. The society at first intended to acquire land near Humpata, at the back of Mossamedes in Portuguese Western Africa, upon which German colonists might be settled, but Count Joachim Pfeil, who had some knowledge of the country, pointed out the superior advantages of Eastern Africa, and Mr. Stanley's glowing account of Usagara, finally determined the direction of the enterprise. Dr. Peters, Dr. Jühlke, and Count J. Pfeil were therefore authorised to acquire land suitable for the establishment of German agricultural and commercial colonies. Their intention, however, owing to the indiscretion of one of the directors, became known, and to prevent being forestalled, a report was spread that the party of colonisers were bound for the Congo, instead of which the three adventurers quietly embarked for Zanzibar, under assumed names, and as steerage passengers.

They reached that place on November 4th 1884; on the 12th of that month they left Saadani for the interior, and on November

* Based upon the *Kolonial-Politische Korrespondenz*, a weekly paper, published by the "Society for German Colonisation," J. Wagner's 'Deutsch-Ost-Afrika,' and other publications of the "German East African Company."